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ABSTRACT

One of the twelve exemplary programs summarized in the Introduction to Right to Read's "Effective Reading Programs: Summaries of 222 Selected Programs" (CS001934), this program attempts to improve the reading skills of inner-city children, increase their aspirational levels, enhance their feelings of self-worth, and stimulate their interest, knowledge, and skills in all the arts. Three times a week, outside school hours, children between the ages of ten and twelve who are poor readers meet at the Guggenheim Museum or at artists' studios to attend workshops in two of fifteen art areas the creation of class journals and diaries, movie scripts, poetry, and the collection of the creation of class journals and diaries, movie scripts, poetry, and the collection of information about artists' lives and works. Instruction in the reading workshops is tailored to correct children's specific skill deficiencies. Every week a special event related to the arts is planned for the children. (TO/AIR)

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PROGRAM AREA: Reading/Disadvantaged

PROJECT TITLE: Guggenheim Museum Children's Program: Learning to Read Through the Arts

LOCATION: New York, New York

SOURCES AND LEVEL OF FUNDING: Title I, ESEA $96,117

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum Foundation $140,000

PROGRAM START DATE: 1971

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

Goals and objectives. The program aims to improve reading skills of inner-city children, to increase their aspirational levels, to enhance their feelings of self worth, and to stimulate their interest, knowledge, and skills in all the arts.

Context. The world-famous Guggenheim Museum is centrally located in New York City, and is easily reached by subway from all over the metropolitan area. Children in the program are provided with two subway tokens for each session. This aspect of the program is believed to increase their sense of independence and responsibility. Eligible children are recommended for program enrollment by superintendents, principals, guidance counselors, and teachers in New York public and private schools. Eligibility is defined as qualifying for Title I services, having evidence of performance at least two years below grade level in reading and/or math, and expressing interest in participating in the program. About four-fifths of the program participants are Black and one-fifth are of Spanish-speaking descent. The children come from low income families (annual income averaging under $6,000) residing in the inner-city area.

Program Description.

Grade levels, years of operation, size--The program has been in operation for over three years serving children between the ages of 10 and 12 in grades 4, 5, and 6. The program serves 130 children.

Staffing, preservice-inservice training--The program staff for this number of participants consists of the following: one project coordinator, 16 professional artist teachers, two reading teachers, three administrative assistants, and student aides and volunteers (as many as possible). The project coordinator serves full time; her salary is paid in equal shares by the Guggenheim Museum and the New York City Board of Education. All other staff are part time.

A preservice training program for the artist teachers and reading teachers is supplemented by two and three hours, respectively, of inservice training and planning each week. The artist teachers are given

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much freedom to undertake art projects of their choice. On the other hand, the weekly meetings insure that reading concepts and skills are incorporated in the various projects' activities.

Curricula--There are several major program features:

- Supplementary classes in reading and art interest areas
- Reading and art workshops taught by reading specialist and artist teachers
- Reading skills infused into art workshops
- Diagnosis and individualization in reading workshops
- Field trips and special events
- Parent involvement

The supplementary classes consist of 15 workshops in the following areas: reading, dance, theater, music, painting, sculpture, printmaking, mixed-media, drawing, crafts, puppetry, super 8 and animated film making, photography, communication arts, and the art and culture of American peoples.

Each child studies in two arts areas of his choice for the six-month duration of the program. These art workshops meet three times a week for 90-minute sessions. In addition, each child meets with a reading teacher in small groups or individually at least 3½ hours each week.

Each arts workshop includes no more than 17 children, and reading workshops are generally much smaller. In the arts workshops, teachers and children work together in organizing class journals, logs, and diaries. Children record their experiences along with acquired information in their workshop notebooks. Each workshop also involves activities such as writing movie scripts, creating poetry, keeping information accounts on artists, their lives and work. A great variety of literature is used in the arts workshops as well.

The reading workshop is organized according to the strengths and weaknesses of the reading skills of individual children, as determined by an item analysis of the California Achievement Test and other diagnostic tools. Students are grouped according to similar reading skill difficulties, and instruction is tailored to correct these specific difficulties. Where there are multiple reading skill deficiencies, children are placed in the group working on the most elemental skills. After children succeed in overcoming deficiences, they move to the next sequential skill that needs improvement. Reading workshops also contain a library reading period when children select books on the arts to read for interest, appreciation, and information. (Major items of equipment and material are listed in the next section.)

Each Saturday afternoon, a field trip or special event is planned for the children, and at the end of the program the museum and Board of Education invite parents and interested school and community members to attend a special program where they can view the work of the children.

(The parent-involvement aspect of the program is described in a later section of the summary.)

Materials--All the reading materials used in the program are prepared to take on a different visual appearance from that which is usually found in an ordinary school situation. For example, oversized sketch books are used for notebooks. Major items of equipment and material consist of the following:

Equipment: cameras, musical instruments, projectors, record players, tape recorders, film viewers

Disposable art supplies: film, paper, paint, clay, fabric

Books on the arts

Diagnostic and skill material in reading, much of which is teacher prepared.

Time involved--Program workshops are held on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday for a total of 12 hours a week for six months (23 weeks). Some of these sessions are art workshops which meet three times a week for 90 minutes each. Reading is taught through arts at these workshops. In addition, at least 3 1/2 hours of the total 12 hours per week is devoted strictly to reading workshops. The balance of the 12 hours is used for field trips and special events.

Facilities--Program activities take place at the Guggenheim Museum and Westbeth studios, a complex of professional artists' studios. Workshops take place in the artist's studios. The galleries, auditorium and lecture halls at the Museum are used for special events, and field trips are taken to points of interest throughout the city.

Parental involvement--A parent's workshop has also been introduced. Since many parents bring their children to the sessions and wait for them, the program involves parents in art activities and shows them how these activities can relate to teaching reading. In addition, parents serve on the program's advisory council and as volunteer assistants on field trips or at special events.

Cost--Total cost of the program is $236,117. The cost of instructional materials for 30 students is approximately $2,000. The cost figures are high because the Guggenheim Museum wants to insure that participants have the best art experience possible. Therefore, each child is provided with his own equipment and supplies. This, however, is not essential for the program. If materials were shared, costs could be decreased considerably.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS: (See attached section.)

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS:

Evaluation conducted by. Howard Conant of the Center for Educational Research and Field Services, School of Education, New York University.

Sample size and method. Superintendents, principals, guidance counselors, and teachers were asked to recommend public and non-public school students who met the following criteria:

- eligibility for Title I services
- performance of at least two years below grade level in reading and/or mathematics (based on the scores achieved or the Metropolitan Achievement Test)
- enrollment in grades 4, 5, or 6 or between the ages of 10 and 12 years of age
- an expressed interest in participating in the program
- a desire to attend the program on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for a 6 month period
- accessibility to the workshops and museum on public transportation or within walking distance of the student's day school
- parental permission permitting children to travel independently to and from the workshops and museum in order to attend the program

One hundred youngsters were selected on the basis of these criteria. Ninety of the youngsters were tested with Level 3 of the California Achievement Test. Due to severe reading retardation on the part of the remaining students, the Level 2 test was used with these participants. Only those who took both the pretest and posttest were included in the analyses. For Level 3, N=60. For Level 2, N=5.

Comparison methods. Gain was measured by comparing the pupil's actual gain with an expected gain. The expected gain was obtained by subtracting 1 (since most standardized test start at 1.0) from each pupil's pretest grade equivalent. This result was divided by the number of months the pupil had been in school to obtain a hypothetical rate of growth per month. Kindergarten was ignored and 1 school year was counted as 10 months. The hypothetical rate of growth was multiplied by the number of months of Title I treatment (in this case, 4) and added to the pupil's pretest grade equivalent. The difference between the group predicted posttest mean and the obtained posttest mean was determined using a correlated t-test.

Measures. Alternate forms of the California Achievement Test (forms A & B) Level 3 (and Level 2) Reading were administered.

Data collection. Pre and posttest data were collected under the direct supervision of the evaluator. Pretest data were actually collected at the end of the second month of treatment due to a delay on the part of the Board of Education in awarding the evaluation contract.

Data analysis. Descriptive statistics used were means, standard deviation and Kuder Richards n 20 reliabilities.

Inferential statistics used consisted of a t-test for correlated means.

Changes in outcome and their reliability. Over the four month interval from pretest to posttest the mean grade equivalent for those pupils taking Level 3 of the CAT (N=60) rose from 3.97 (SD=1.16) to 4.81 (SD=1.74). The expected posttest score was 4.19 (SD=1.80) making a net gain of .62 beyond what was expected. This result is significant at beyond the 1 percent level. (Significant gains were also made by students tested with Level 2 of the CAT, but the N is too small to be reliable.)

Kuder Richardson formula 20 reliabilities were .93 and .83 for the vocabulary and comprehension subtests respectively on the pretest and were .93 and .85 respectively on the posttest.

Educational significance. Within the four month period between pretest and posttest, children who were chosen with a clear handicap were raised, on the average 6.2 months beyond what was expected without the program.